



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

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TO LEA Superintendents
Charter School Directors

FROM Rebecca B. Garland, Deputy State Superintendent
Office of the Deputy State Superintendent

Tammy L. Howard, Director
Accountability Services

2016–17 MINIMAL DELAY IN SCORES FOR ENGLISH II END-OF-COURSE (EOC) AND NORTH CAROLINA FINAL EXAMS (NCFEs) WITH CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE ITEMS

Some tests in the North Carolina Testing Program include constructed response (CR) items. These items require students to produce a written response, rather than select an answer from a list. Student responses for CR items are distributed to human scorers. As a result, the CR responses are more time-consuming to score than traditional multiple-choice questions, producing a minimal delay in test scores. Due to the scoring of CR items, test scores that will be delayed for administrations include the following:

End-of-Course:

- English II

North Carolina Final Exams:

- English III
- Grade 8 Social Studies
- American History: The Founding Principles, Civics, and Economics
- World History
- American History I
- American History II

Local Education Agencies (LEAs)/charter schools are encouraged to schedule administrations of assessments with CR items at the beginning of the testing window. This will allow maximum time to submit, score, and return test scores. Additionally, the NCTest online delivery mode decreases the time required to submit, score, and return scores. Therefore, Accountability Services strongly recommends LEAs/charter schools administer North Carolina Final Exams (NCFEs) with CR items online; LEAs/charter schools are required to administer the English II end-of-course (EOC) assessment online. Completed test records for English II online assessments will be submitted electronically to the vendor each night at 7:00 p.m. Completed test records for online NCFEs with CR items will be submitted immediately. Vendors will begin scoring the morning after the test record is received and will return the scored online test records electronically to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) within approximately 72 hours (3 business days) of starting the scoring process. Test coordinators should allow 4–5 business days to receive scored online test records.

For LEAs/charter schools administering paper-and-pencil tests with CR items, the completed answer sheets must be shipped by LEA/charter school test coordinators to the vendor each test day. The vendors will score all

DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY SERVICES

6314 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6314 | (919) 807-3769 | Fax (919) 807-3772

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items (i.e., multiple-choice and CR). The scoring process will begin the morning after the test record is received by the vendor. Scored paper-and-pencil test records will be returned electronically to the NCDPI within 7 business days of starting the scoring process. Test coordinators should allow approximately 7–8 business days to receive scored paper-and-pencil records.

The attached table, *English II EOC and North Carolina Final Exam Constructed Response Scoring/Return Dates for 2016–17*, summarizes the scoring windows and score return times for the 2016–17 assessment year. The scoring period must include time to score the CR items and to return a single score for each student for his or her multiple-choice and CR items.

State Board policies GCS-A-016 and GCS-C-003 require public schools to use results from all course specific operational assessments as at least twenty percent (20%) of the student's final grade for each respective course (with the exception of students following the Occupational Course of Study and end-of-year assessments in grades 3–8). Because test scores may not be returned by the last day of the semester, students administered these assessments during fall 2016 and spring 2017 semesters should be assigned "incompletes" until scores are returned from the vendor. The scores must then be used to calculate the final grade for the course and to determine if students are appropriately enrolled in spring 2017 or upcoming fall 2017 courses. An exception to this policy will be made for high school seniors graduating at the end of the current semester. LEAs/charter schools may choose not to use the scores from the English II EOC/NCFE assessments that contain CR items as a minimum of 20% to calculate the final grades for seniors. This will allow schools to make graduation decisions in a timely manner.

The NCDPI recognizes the delayed scores may also impact student placement decisions. Course placement decisions should be made in the same way decisions are made for other courses not requiring an EOC assessment or NCFE (e.g., performance on classroom assessments, homework grades). Once these test scores are incorporated as at least 20% of the student's final grade for the course, the LEA/charter school must determine if the student is inappropriately enrolled in a spring/fall course. The deadline to drop students who are inappropriately enrolled is within the first 10 days of enrollment in a 4x4/semester course or the first 20 days of enrollment in a traditional yearlong course.

Please share this information with your principals and school test coordinators. If you have questions or need further clarification regarding information contained within this memo, please contact your Regional Accountability Coordinator (RAC).

RBG/TLH/whw

c: June St. Clair Atkinson, State Superintendent
Dave Machado, Director, Office of Charter Schools
JoAnne Honeycutt, Director, Career and Technical Education
Nancy Carolan, Section Chief, Testing Policy and Operations
Hope Lung, Section Chief, Test Development
Ken Barbour, Data Manager, Accountability Services
Regional Accountability Coordinators
LEA Test Coordinators

Attachment

English II EOC and North Carolina Final Exam Constructed Response Scoring/Return Dates for 2016–17

Test Cycle Window	NCTest Opens	Scoring Begins ¹	Return Time for Scores ²	Online Testing Window Closes (NCTest Closes) ³	Paper/Pencil Shipping Deadline ⁴
Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) Fall	September 12, 2016	September 12, 2016 (online scoring only)	NCTest Online: 4–5 business days Paper-and-Pencil: 7–8 business days	September 23, 2016	Paper administrations not permitted
Fall 2016	November 15, 2016	December 5, 2016 (online and paper/pencil scoring)		January 31, 2017	February 10, 2017
CDM Spring	February 15, 2017	February 16, 2017 (online scoring only)		February 28, 2017	Paper administrations not permitted
Spring 2017	March 1, 2017	May 2, 2017 (online and paper/pencil scoring)		June 23, 2017 ⁵	June 20, 2017 ⁶

¹Tests are scored in order of receipt. Test records are scored independent of each other and will not be organized by LEA, school, or classroom especially in the case of NCTest online records.

²The score return timeline begins with the first business day following the receipt of the test records to be scored.

³Online test administrations and coding must be completed before 7:00 p.m. Online test records received after this date will not be scored until the next online test record scoring window.

⁴All paper/pencil materials must be shipped to the vendor by the deadline for each test cycle. Materials shipped after the deadline will not be scored until the next paper/pencil scoring window.

⁵Any spring 2017 online test records received by the vendor after June 23, 2017 will be scored starting on July 5, 2017. This data will not be included in 2016–17 accountability calculations.

⁶Any spring 2017 paper/pencil test records shipped after June 20, 2017 will be scored starting July 5, 2017. This data will not be included in 2016–17 accountability calculations.